

Commissionaires Nova Scotia (CNS)-Response to Bill 22 Security Services Act Presented to Nova Scotia Government Law Amendments Committee

Commissionaires Nova Scotia (CNS) has actively participated in discussions and consultations since February 2007 with the Department of Justice and other companies and organizations in Nova Scotia. CNS fully supports the Minister of Justice and his department's efforts to provide the best legislation possible for citizens of Nova Scotia. CNS recognizes the efforts of the Minister to make Nova Scotian communities safer and appreciates the opportunity to invest time and effort into a process that will assist the Government with these initiatives.

Security Investigators Alliance of Nova Scotia (SIANS), of which CNS is a member, is making a separate submission that identifies and expresses issues and concerns that the industry feels need full attention before the Act moves forward. CNS completely endorses that position. However, since CNS will possibly be included in the new legislation, we feel there are some additional specific concerns that need to be brought forward as they impact directly on how CNS does business and CNS wants to better understand these implications. CNS, as you probably know, provides security services to a wide range of clients that are governed by municipal, provincial and federal laws/statutes/by-laws. CNS needs to know how the interface between these jurisdictions will function.

Presently CNS employs a recruiting process that includes a detailed personal suitability interview and extensive security screening for criminal checks and security clearance status. As well, CNS requires all our members to take an expanded 52 hour security guard training program that meets the Canadian General Standards Board (CGSB-Security Officer) criteria. CNS needs to know what adjustments might be possible to avoid duplicating your requirements, possibly by employing a verification of CNS documentation for licensing. CNS has capacity to complete Electronic Canadian Police Identification Checks (Electronic CPIC) and digital fingerprinting for quick turnaround investigations. Further, CNS needs to know if there will be a period of grace for compliance with these new regulations.

CNS recognizes the need to have a strong regulatory process, but not at a level of authority and ability to intrude that complicates and disrupts business. CNS feels there should be a mechanism, as part of good regulation, established in the Act to afford public/industry an opportunity to seek a review or appeal of decisions made by Registrar or Compliance Officers.

Specifically CNS wishes to present the following observations that support our previous comment/concerns:

1. Bill 22 is minimally changed from the original document;
2. Bill 22 continues to be vague on numerous essential conditions of licensing (e.g. principles of training standards;
3. The Honorable Ross Landry is recorded in Hansard: ***Input from the security industry is not only invaluable, it is necessary that we get these regulations right- right for Nova Scotia business and right for public safety. (Page 1635)*** Developing and implementing regulations is an enormous task for the Governor in Council and Department of Justice staff to address. Their crucial task can be supported by establishing a clear mechanism for public and industry input. Government would be wise to establish a public and industry advisory board for inclusion in Bill 22 not unlike the School Advisory Council approach in the Education Act. This would embed an element of transparency/accountability for regulations- their implementation and impact on public safety and industry;
4. D of J is given in Bill 22 the authority to approve names of companies that have already been approved by the Registry of Stocks and Companies. So Para 14 the approval of names, in the act, is redundant and is contrary to the governments Better Business Regulations Initiative- duplication of government effort;
5. The discretionary powers afforded the Registrar, Deputy Registrar and Compliance Officers creates concerns over Protection of Privacy Act, Intellectual Property statutes and intrusion of business. The timelines proposed further create a significant challenge for employment of individuals and not to speak of administrative nightmares that will accompany this;
6. If commissionaires are to be licensed then Bill 22 needs to provide legacy or grandfathered relative to enactment of regulations afforded to them- companies need to have a smooth transition to the new act is to ensure no disruption of service to clients and operation of business;
7. Hopefully the complaint process as established in Bill 22 (Para 20) will be doable and not follow the RCMP overwhelming experience of opening the floodgates- a cautionary note;

CNS is fully aware that many of these matters will be addressed in the ensuing regulations developed after the Act is proclaimed. Having had draft regulations prior to the introduction of the bill would have been very helpful. In fact it would seem prudent for government to delay passing Bill 22 until the draft regulations are readied, through consultation with the public and industry, in 6-12 months as Minister of Justice indicated on Friday 9 April 2010. This would allow the public and industry time to reflect on the regulations and have government introduce changes to Bill 22 to further support the regulations. This would not impact on the implementation of Bill 22 and the public/industry will see a smooth and quick transition from passage to implementation.

However, introduction of these new regulations will necessitate planning on our part so there is no disruption of delivery of services to our clients and thus CNS is committed to work with Department of Justice staff to ensure a smooth transition of issuing 1700 new security guard licenses.

CNS looks forward very much to begin meaningful dialogue to plan the implementation as promised by Honorable Ross Landry, Minister of Justice at his briefing of Bill 22 on Friday 9 April 2010. Please find attached a copy of our overall operation fact sheet for your information.

CNS is, and as a member of SIANS, committed to ensuring Nova Scotians have the best possible legislation to address the need for regulation and accountability of security service providers. We share with government the goal to increase the level of safety in our communities. Request that the Law Amendments Committee cause the identified changes to be enacted prior to third reading.

Respectfully Submitted

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COMMISSIONAIRES

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Commissionaires Nova Scotia (CNS) is a not-for-profit organization with a mandate to provide meaningful employment for veterans of the Canadian Forces and RCMP. CNS has been protecting people and property from Yarmouth to Sydney since 1937 and

- Employs 1700 members at more than 200 work sites throughout Nova Scotia
- Maintains an annual budget of approximately \$40 million with 91% of funds generated provided to members in pay and benefits
- Operates with a Board of Governors made up of 16 volunteer members with a range of military, business and other professional backgrounds; a CEO and staff at Headquarters in Halifax; District Offices in Sydney, Truro and Kentville; Training Centre in Burnside Industrial Park, Dartmouth and commercial identification services walk-in centre in Maritime Centre, Halifax; and
- Is one of 17 Divisions across Canada with a total of 19,000 members

In light of domestic and international security threats and increased demand for professional security services, continuous technological advances and an ever changing competitive security industry, CNS is constantly upgrading its operations to

- Provide a wide range of security solutions/guarding, municipal enforcement, identification and training services
- Serve a growing client base including government departments and agencies, business and industry, hospitals, air and seaports, educational institutions and law enforcement agencies
- Focus on attracting members leaving the military, including those who do not have a pension but who offer skills and knowledge of value to clients
- Ensure new and serving members receive the highest level of training and refresher training at the state-of-the-art CNS Training Centre
- Operate to provide superior service to a diversified client base and maximum wages and benefits for members; and
- Identify new and better ways of doing business

Check out our Website: www.commissionaires.ns.ca

Supporting Veterans ~ Protecting People and Property



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- ★ - Truro Office
- ★ - Sydney Office

<i>Commissionaires Employed by District:</i>	
Halifax Regional Municipality:	1,189
Cape Breton District:	197
Northern NS District:	170
Valley/South Shore District:	159



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